



INL Laboratory Director John Grossenbacher joined Utah Gov. Gary Herbert and Marc and Debbie Bingham, center, to cut the ceremonial ribbon and officially dedicate the Bingham Research Center last month.

INL helps dedicate new entrepreneurship and energy center

By [Keith Arterburn](#) and [Reuel Smith](#), *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

Eastern Utah recently celebrated a local businessman's "hope, dream and vision" by opening a new \$30 million regional center that combines education, entrepreneurship and energy research at a single location. The [Bingham Entrepreneurship and Energy Research Center](#) — named for Marc and Debbie Bingham — will host several scientific organizations, including the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory.

"We are pleased and proud to join this dedication," said INL Laboratory Director John Grossenbacher, who joined [Utah Gov. Gary Herbert](#), [Utah State University](#) President Stan Albrecht and about 400 guests at the Sept. 24 dedication.

The Bingham Research Center, in Vernal, Utah's Uintah Basin, is a 70,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility with classrooms, offices and laboratories. It also has a large laboratory where INL expects to demonstrate the integration of hybrid energy systems related to oil shale development with USU and industry collaborators.



The new \$30 million [Bingham Entrepreneurship and Energy Research Center](#) combines education, entrepreneurship and energy research at a single location.



Grossenbacher told more than 400 dedication guests that INL's involvement emphasizes the four P's: people, places, partnerships and programs.

At the dedication, Grossenbacher emphasized the importance of the energy research to be conducted at the center. He applauded the leadership Herbert demonstrated with his 10-year energy plan, USU's long-term dedication to energy research and the vibrant leadership within the Uintah Basin energy industry.

Grossenbacher also described INL as a "capability machine" intent on meeting some of the nation's "most significant challenges." He added that INL's involvement with the center follows an emphasis on the four Ps — people, places, partnerships and programs. Through a joint appointment with USU's [Energy Dynamics Laboratory](#), INL's Michael Hagood will serve as the founding executive director for the Eastern Utah Secure Energy Partnership and Program, which will be located at the Bingham Research Center.

"The Eastern Utah Secure Energy Partnership and Program will focus on smart and responsible development of energy resources in the region, including addressing energy policy, research, environmental monitoring, economic development and education," Hagood said. "As part of this program, INL and the new center will collaborate on developing solutions associated with energy development."

The Uintah Basin, which has significant energy resources including large quantities of oil shale, is home to more than a dozen energy companies and represents a key resource strategic to U.S. energy security.

"The Bingham Research Center will allow Utah State to aggressively and strategically pursue its research interests and opportunities in areas of the state where vast energy resources and new business opportunities exist," Albrecht said. He thanked INL's Hagood for helping to shape the program and educational curricula for the center.

Herbert's remarks noted that Marc and Debbie Bingham were examples of those living the American dream and that their \$15 million gift to the center offered the potential for "unprecedented partnerships and unlimited possibilities" in combining education, entrepreneurship and energy research.



Grossenbacher, left, chats with entrepreneurs Marc, center, and Debbie Bingham, right, prior to the dedication.



Bingham Research Center partners meet to discuss potential applications of INL's hybrid energy systems concept in the Uintah Basin.

In addition to the Bingham's gift, the Bob Williams family donated 138 acres of land worth more than \$5 million to help make the new center a reality. Groundbreaking for the Bingham center was held in November 2008.

The building will be home to selected research efforts of several scientific organizations including INL, [Utah State University's Space Dynamics and Energy Dynamics](#) laboratories, the Utah Science Technology and Research initiative, and the Eastern Utah Secure Energy Partnership and Program.

"(These organizations) and local industry and community leaders have partnered to create not just an unprecedented new facility," said Robert Behunin, USU special assistant to the president, "but a revolutionary opportunity for all of eastern Utah."

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